

## Ten Things I Want to Tell Start-Of-Semester Me

### Number One

You are about to enter the most important semester of your life, and it is everything you are worried about and so much more.

Everything anyone has told you is 100% true and I know you are so scared right now, but don't worry! All of that anxiety will turn straight into stress within the first week.

### But, Number Two,

It isn't a terrible amount of work. At first, you'll feel like you've been reading and writing reflections for 12 hours straight, but in six weeks when all you're doing is writing lessons, you'll be glad you're a walking BuzzFeed article on "110 cool ways to engage every kind of learner in your class!"

### Number Three,

Everything you know is wrong. I get it, you were a high school student once, which means you completely understand everything it takes to be a teacher, right? Wrong. By the end of this course, every weird thing your teachers did in high school is gonna make so much more sense. Ever had a teacher whose lessons didn't make sense together, or who had a final assessment that didn't make any sense? Yeah, that's what happens when you don't use backwards design.

### That being said, Number Four

Once you're done here, everything makes so much more sense. Like, how can you even begin to plan any lessons if you have no idea what you want to teach your students? If you don't know what you want your students to know, then how can you accurately judge if they understand the content? You can't! You can't say that a student achieved the desired result if you didn't even know what that result was while you were teaching. It doesn't work like that. And by the end of this course, you'll understand everything I just said and more.

### Number five

I know you hate working in groups, but you gotta suffer through it because believe it or not, there are people out there who do, and they deserve to be comfortable too. And these people can be found in your colleagues, your friends, and your students, and you need to accommodate them. And don't go thinking "well I don't like group discussion, so I won't use it in my class," because this whole teaching thing isn't about you. It's about the students, it will never not be about the students, and if even one kid in your class learns best by working in a group, you better give him the chance to do just that.

### And besides, all this group work is a reminder that Number Six,

You are not alone. Everyone else in that class is going through the same thing you are, and they're probably feeling the same way you are. And your friends outside of class won't abandon you just because you've got 8 chapters of reading to do this weekend and can't hang

out with them. They understand how important this is for you, and they know you'll understand when they're in the same position.

#### Number Seven

Remember to have fun! Despite all the work you've got, there is always time to enjoy life a little. Have fun with your unit! If you're enjoying it, chances are your students will too. And there's still time for fun outside of class. Believe me, you can indeed be a part of whatever clubs you're in, get the directing opportunity of your life, and still be a successful practicum student.

But between all of that, please, Number Eight

Get lots of sleep. You need at least eight hours every night, and it is completely doable. It might mean you're going to bed at 10:30 every night and all your friends call you a grandma because you can hardly stay awake until midnight on Fridays, but it's worth it if it means you're not falling asleep in class.

Number nine,

Just do it! Procrastination is your absolute worst enemy because procrastination means you're sitting in the library basement for 7 hours on a Sunday trying to get your work done because you waited until the absolute last minute when you've had three whole weeks to get this done! Even it out, manage your time wisely, and just get your work done. There's nothing like the feeling of not having to worry about anything for an entire weekend.

And finally, Number Ten,

You will survive. You will make it through, you will learn so much about what it means to be a teacher, and who you are as a person. It's an incredible opportunity to learn so much from professors who have dedicated their heart and soul to education, and their passion is incredibly inspiring. This will be the most challenging semester for you, but also the most rewarding. Have a great semester!